



LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Celebrating 26 Years of Advocacy & Achievement

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Dr. La-Doris McClanney
Rev. Cecil L. Murray
Sandra Rudnick
Adelina Sorkin, LCSW/ACSW
Martha Trevino Powell
Dr. Harriette F. Williams

APPROVED MINUTES

The Meeting of the Commission for Children and Families was held on Monday, **March 7, 2011**, in Room 739 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles. **Please note that these minutes are intended as a summary and not as a verbatim accounting or transcription of events at this meeting.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT (Quorum Established)

Genevra Berger	Dr. La-Doris McClanney
Carol O. Biondi	Steven M. Olivas, Esq.
Patricia Curry	Martha Trevino Powell
Ann Franzen	Stacey Savelle
Susan F. Friedman	Adelina Sorkin, LCSW/ACSW
Dr. Sunny Kang	Dr. Harriette F. Williams
Helen A. Kleinberg	

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT (Excused/Unexcused)

Rev. Cecil L. Murray	Sandra Rudnick
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I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Curry at 10:10 a.m.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Self introductions were made.

III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- **March 7, 2011**

Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner McClanney, seconded by Commissioner Kleinberg (Commissioners Murray and Rudnick being absent), the agenda for March 7, 2011, was unanimously approved.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- **February 7, 2011**

500 West Temple Street, Hall of Administration, Room B-22, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 213/974-1558 Fax: 213/625-5813

www.lachildrenscommission.org

Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Friedman (Commissioners Murray and Rudnick being absent), the February 7, 2011 minutes ([copy on file](#)) were unanimously approved.

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Curry reported the following:

- The Women of the Year Awards Luncheon hosted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Commission for Women, at which Commissioner McClaney is being honored, will be held on March 14, 2011. Please inform staff if you wish to attend, tickets are selling quickly. A table for the Commission has been reserved.
- Annual Statement of Economic Interest (Forms 700) are due the first week of April 2011. Commissioners should have received an e-mail with instructions on electronic filing of Forms 700. However, Commissioners may contact staff for copies of forms and schedules, and may complete them at the end of the meeting.
- In a recent meeting with Interim Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Director Antonia Jimenez, she stated that the Department has narrowed its search for a new Director down to two candidates. Ms. Jimenez also noted that progress is being made on the backlog of Emergency Response (ER) cases over thirty days. A report on the status of these cases is forthcoming.
- Commissioner Sandra Rudnick contacted staff this morning, unfortunately she will not attend today's meeting; her brother-in-law passed away this morning.
- A motion by Mayor Antonovich to move DCFS from the Child and Family Well-Being Cluster to the Health Services Cluster (Agenda No. 6) will be heard at the Board of Supervisors (Board) meeting on March 8, 2011.

Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner McClaney, seconded by Commissioner Biondi (Commissioners Murray and Rudnick being absent), and unanimously carried, the Commission made a finding pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(b)(2), that there is a need to take immediate action and that the need for action came to the attention of the Commission subsequent to the agenda being posted as specified in subdivision (a); and on motion of Commissioner Biondi, seconded by Commissioner Williams (Commissioners Murray and Rudnick being absent), the Commission authorized the Chair and Commissioner Sorkin to present concerns and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors at their meeting scheduled for March 8, 2011 on Agenda Item No. 6 relating to the reassignment of the

Department of Children and Family Services from the Child and Family Well-Being Cluster to the Health Services Cluster.

Action Taken:

After discussion, by common consent and there being no objection, Chair Curry's verbal report was received and filed.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

a. Follow Up Presentation by DCFS' Family Preservation Program, as requested at the meeting of January 10, 2011 (Continued from the meeting of February 7, 2011.)

**Marilynn Garrison, DCFS
Naftali Sampson, DCFS**

At the January 10, 2011, Commission meeting, the Commission requested Mr. Garrison and Mr. Sampson to return to address the following questions posed by the Commission.

Ms. Garrison and Mr. Sampson reported the following:

- 1. How is the \$11.5 million reinvestment dollars distributed by SPA? The response should indicate whether there is an equitable distribution of funds based on caseload size. For example, does SPA 6 receive the greatest allocation? Which service providers are located in each SPA, and what is the dollar amount each receives.**
 - Since the last Commission meeting, DCFS reassessed the utilization of Family Preservation services and the allocation of Title IV-E funds. The agency has projected an increase of \$ 9.7 million for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-11. DCFS arrived at this projected allocation based on the actual utilization of services for the period of July through December 2010.
 - This distribution allocation will be based on need and the amount of Emergency Response referrals each DCFS Office receives. In the coming year, DCFS will also take into account additional demographic indicators to assess the need and to plan for the best utilization of funds. Indicators to be considered include: risk, poverty, and crime rate.
- 2. How do the Family Renunciation (FR) and Family Maintenance (FM) cases relate to Front End and Back End cases?**
 - Family Preservation services are provided for Family Maintenance (FM), a service provided to families in which DCFS determines that instead of detaining the children, FM is provided to families in an effort to strengthen and maintain the family. Family Preservation services are also given in preparation of Family Reunification. Families can also voluntarily accept Family Preservation services.
- 3. How many cases are court-ordered for Family Preservation services?**

- DCFS does not currently have a mechanism to track the number of cases that are court-ordered for Family Preservation services. However, 57 percent are court involved. DCFS is currently reviewing methods to track the number of court-ordered Family Preservation services.

4. What is the average length of time a family receives Family Preservation services?

- Based on data reviewed by DCFS from the last two Fiscal Years, it was determined that the average length of time a family receives Family Preservation services is approximately 5.6 months. Family Preservation services are six months long with the possibility of extensions.

5. In terms of counseling services, are Mental Health dollars being accessed?

- DCFS and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in which DMH provides mental health services to DCFS families receiving Family Preservation services. DCFS allocates funds for the indigent population to receive mental health services. However, the non-indigent population's mental health services are funded by DMH.

6. There is a finite amount of Auxiliary funds. Does DCFS and contract agencies access faith-based organization to access items being requested or needed by families?

- Yes, DCFS has a responsibility to find community resources first, and agencies collaborate on resource sharing. Meetings to address community resources are conducted between DCFS and contracted agencies on a monthly basis. Additionally, agencies also conduct monthly meetings. However, there is a finite amount of community resources available.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Ms. Garrison and Mr. Sampson added the following:

- The projected \$9.7 million allocation is for the FY 2010-11. The monies are derived from Title IV-E reinvestment dollars. These monies are funding the agency contracts which include up-front assessments, alternative response services, participation in Team Decision Making, and Family Preservation services.
- DCFS has a research section that breaks down several indicators based on zip code.
- The original allocation to Family Preservation was to fund Alternative Response and Family Preservation services. Alternative response services are provided to referrals that are not cases, but referrals that have been designated

as low to moderate risk. Only, open cases are eligible to receive Family Preservation. Family Preservation services are not offered after a case has been closed.

- The Family Preservation agencies receive the base allocation of \$1,050 per family they serve. However, there are supplemental services in which they charge per hour, the average spent per family for Family Preservation is approximately \$1,300.
- DCFS currently provides \$2.2 million to DMH to provide mental health services.
- Family Preservation served approximately 5,063 families which equates to approximately 11,300 children in FY 2009-10. For referrals that do not promote to cases, Family Preservation served approximately 1,724 families which equates to 3,593 children in FY 2009-10.
- The DCFS research section has begun preparing an evaluation to determine the results of Family Preservation; said evaluation is slated to be ready in six months (September 2011). The indicators for the evaluation will be collected from discussions with the Family Preservation agencies, the web-based data collection system developed in 2005, information from social workers' requests for Family Preservation or Alternative Response services that was logged and collected in the CSW/CMS system. The evaluation will focus on data from collected since 2005 to the present, and is anticipated to be completed in approximately one year.
- The data from the evaluation, as well as the indicators, may be provided to Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey Director of the University of Southern California's School of Social Work and other universities and researchers such as Ms. Bonnie Armstrong from Casey Family Programs.
- Family Preservation does not have a breakdown of the number of Latino families it has served; however, a data run will be conducted to determine the percentage of Latino families that are currently receiving Family Preservation.

DCFS Chief Deputy Director, Dr. Jackie Contreras reported the following:

- The breakdown of the programs and services that DCFS has funded up to Fiscal Year 2010-11, using reinvestment dollars include:
 - \$8.2 million in Family Team Decision Making/Permanency Placement Conferences in FY 2007-08, and over the last four years
 - \$7.9 million in Youth Permanency Units in FY 2007-08, and over the last four years
 - \$6.3 million PIDP in FY 2009-10, and over the two years

- \$19.9 million in Up-Front Assessments as a component of Family Preservation in FY 2007-08, and over the last four years.
- To date a total of \$42.3 million of reinvestment dollars has been spent since the implementation of Title IV-E.
- The first step for next year is to reevaluate the investments that DCFS has made and consider if the amount of investment is appropriate for the outcomes the Department desires. Outcomes and future direction on the following investments are as follows:
 - Youth Permanency is at the top of the list for positive outcomes.
 - *Parent in Partners Program* is a small program that DCFS has found successful and is considering expanding to all of the DCFS offices.
 - DCFS will consider investing in *Partnership for Families*.
 - Reducing case loads, for both front-end and back-end is also a consideration by DCFS.
 - Implementation of Quality Service Reviews (QSR) on front-end in addition to back-end QSR is also being considered.
 - Expansion of Visitation Centers in various communities. Visitation Centers traditionally have taken a small portion of funding; however, have been successful by partnering with the faith-based community.
- Title IV-E which was recently extended to April 2013; therefore, DCFS must make certain that any reinvestment is done prior to that date.
- DCFS will continue to work with First 5 LA regarding funding for Partnerships for Families because this is a model that has produced positive outcomes.
- Data used in determining the outcomes for services offered by Family Preservation include:
 - The number of children that have remained safely at home.
 - Children receiving up-front assessment versus children who do not.
 - Timeline to reunification, which has revealed that children who received up-front assessments were reunified sooner than those who did not.

Action Taken:

After discussion, by common consent and there being no objection, this item was received and filed.

Ms. Trina Covarrubias addressed the Commission.

VII. DISCUSSIONS

- a. Discussion and approval of a letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding recommendations

Chair Curry

by the Commission for the Prevention Initiative
Demonstration Project (PIDP)

Action Taken:

After discussion, on motion of Commissioner Biondi, seconded by Commissioner Kleinberg, the letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding recommendations by the Commission for the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) ([copy on file](#)) was approved with the following changes:

Paragraph 1:

We are writing to ~~you~~ requesting that the funding and outcome evaluations for the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) contracts be reviewed and the funding be restored to the original first year commitment of \$5 million. In addition, we request that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) develop a plan ~~which that~~ would build on the success of PIDP and the positive outcomes achieved for children and their families. The plan should include working with the PIDP providers to integrate their work with the work ~~that is~~ being done by other County departments; and should identify funds for expansion of PIDP in future years.

Paragraph 2:

In recent months, ~~T~~there has been a significant focus in recent months on child safety and the work done by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Emergency Response (ER) workers. The significant backlog of cases in ER has required resources throughout DCFS to be redeployed to the front end, taking workers from other vital services in the Department, ~~to reduce the backlog.~~ The outcomes for PIDP show a significant drop in those families “re-referred” to DCFS who have received PIDP services. The PIDP evaluation also shows that children and families receiving services experienced more “permanency exists” than those without PIDP services. . . . It seems prudent, at this time, to expand ~~a~~ this program ~~that~~ which shows positive outcomes for families, reduces caseloads by increasing permanency, and alleviates ~~some of~~ the burden on the front end ER by reducing re-entry rates. While the evaluation report did not contain a complete fiscal analysis, it ~~seems likely~~ is believed that these positive outcomes most likely yield a savings to the County as well.

Paragraph 3:

It is imperative for the safety and success of the children and families of our County that we provide the best services possible and support ~~and fund~~ programs with proven positive results ~~over~~ rather than those programs that have poor results; or have not been evaluated. ~~Without the funding,~~ these PIDP networks ~~will be~~ run the risk of being dismantled and we will lose the valuable assistance they provide.

**b. Discussion Implementation of the Legistar5 Program
To enhance the preparation of Commission meeting
minutes and agendas**

**Angie Montes, Chief
Commission Services**

Ms. Montes provided an overview of the Legistar 5 (L5) Program being implemented in Commission Services to create Commission agendas and minutes to conform to the minutes and agendas of the Board of Supervisors. She highlighted the benefits of using L5 Program, and responded to questions posed by the Commission.

Action Taken:

After discussion, by common consent and there being no objection, Ms. Montes' report was received and filed.

VIII. DCFS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

**Dr. Jackie Contreras,
Chief Deputy Director, DCFS**

Dr. Contreras reported the following:

- DCFS is in the final stages of hiring a new Director. The search has been narrowed down to two candidates. DCFS expects a recommendation will be put forth by the Chief Executive Office (CEO) to the Board soon.
- DCFS is aggressively pursuing the five year renewal of the Title IV-E Waiver. The CEO's office will take the lead on pursuing this renewal.
- DCFS has made significant progress in reducing the number of ER cases over 60 days. As of today the number of ER cases over 60 days is down to 2,500 from a high of 6,200 in July of 2010.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Dr. Contreras added the following:

- DCFS is looking very closely into why the backlog came to be. One of the factors that contributed to the increase was the result of policy changes that resulted in additional work without an increase in staff.

Action Taken:

After discussion, by common consent and there being no objection, Dr. Contreras' report was received and filed.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was none.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Curry at 12:09 p.m.